



Rocky Hills Herd Management Area Eureka County, Nevada

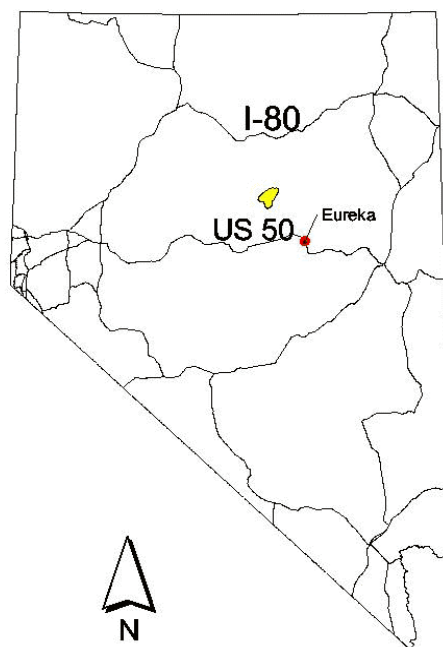
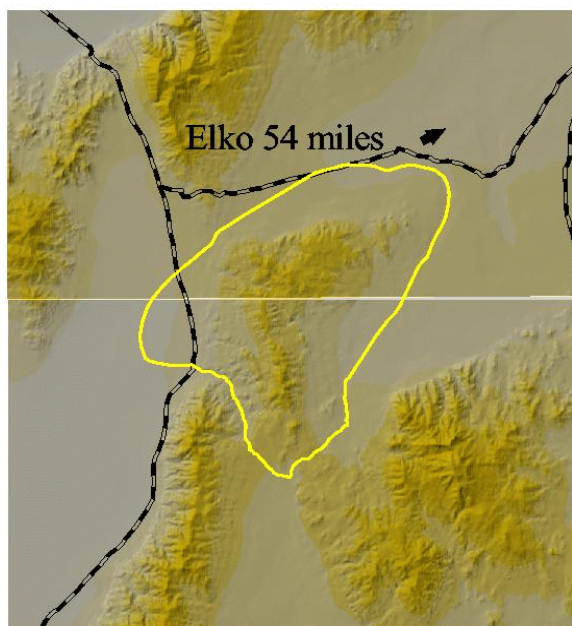


Location/Habitat

The Rocky Hills Herd Management Area (HMA) is, located 54 miles southwest of Elko, Nevada, in Eureka County. The area consists of 83,998 acres, and is 15 miles wide and 13 miles long. It encompasses the Rocky Hills and Simpson Park Mountains. Elevations range from 8,100 feet, down to 5,500 feet throughout Denay and Horse Creek valleys that surround the mountain ranges.

The terrain across most of the former Shoshone-Eureka planning area managed by the Battle Mountain Field Office is typical of the Great Basin region with steep north and south trending mountain ranges separated by large sweeping valley bottoms. Temperatures range in excess of 100 degrees in the summer to less than 20 degrees below zero in the winter. Precipitation is in short supply with an annual total of only 5 to 16 inches. Nevada is the driest state in the nation with the least amount of annual rainfall and the lowest amount of surface water.

In addition to wild horses, the HMA is often utilized by domestic cattle and domestic sheep. Wildlife species occurring in the area include mule deer, sage grouse, chukar, coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats, pronghorn antelope and numerous other small mammals, birds, and reptiles.



Vegetation

Vegetation types are distributed according to topography and elevation and the associated precipitation. Within the highest elevations, and subsequently the greatest precipitation, the vegetation consists primarily of pinyon-pine and juniper trees, mountain-mahogany and low sagebrush. The lower and drier elevations consist of saltbush, greasewood, sagebrush and a variety of annual and perennial grasses and wildflowers. In some areas it can take 25 acres to support one horse for one month.

Herd Description

The horses in the Rocky Hills HMA are relatively large in size, with some animals reaching 16 hands (64 inches) high. Several paint, Curly and Appaloosa horses were captured, in addition to those that were brown, bay, black, red roan, buckskin, chestnut and grulla (mouse colored). Many of the horses also exhibit draft horse characteristics.

The HMA has a unique historical background. The ranchers in the area raised curly-haired horses and bred many different breeds of horses with the Curly horses and wild horses which included draft, Arabian, Appaloosa, Quarter Horse and others. The horses that were raised on the ranch were the foundation stock for the Rocky Hills HMA. This HMA is in close proximity to the Bald Mountain, Callaghan, and Roberts Mountain HMAs. Mixing among herds is likely.